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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: CORONATION OF OBAMA; NEW DELHI.

This countrywide cable reports on relevant media reaction/opinion from India's large non-English press. The Mission reports on English-language media via email through the daily "Early Edition" summary.

CORONATION OF OBAMA

1. "BIRTH OF A NEW DREAM," editorial in January 22 centrist NAVBHARAT TIMES Hindi daily: "In the U.S., thousands will attend a rock concert, but it gets tough to get even a hundred people to a political gathering. But they came for Obama -- in thousands, braving the numbing cold. So, what made them come in such large numbers? It's the man's charisma - his audacity of hope. Usually professional speech writers write presidential speeches. But it is believed that Obama penned his own lines. Perhaps that is why it came out as so honest - without rhetoric and theatrics! But the road is not smooth for Obama. In history, no other President has seen shares and stocks plummet to such low levels on his inauguration day. In India, there is much concern and apprehension over what Obama's strategy in this region will be. For Indians, it is better to keep shut and not indulge in speculative rhetoric until the Obama Administration puts its cards on the table."

2. "HOPE FROM OBAMA," editorial in 22 January right-of-center DAINIK JAGRAN Hindi daily: "It is perhaps the first time the rest of the world is investing as much hope in a U.S. president as are the Americans. He is

under tremendous pressure to show immediate results on both national and international fronts. But given the complexity of the situation one should also consider that he has neither taken over as the world's president, nor does he have a magic wand. India also has high hopes as he hinted that Afghanistan and Pakistan were his priority. But he would not necessarily solve the problem of terrorism the way India wants. India's reaction is understandable on Obama's linking terrorism to the Kashmir issue, but it is meaningless to be extra skeptical or defensive. Similarly, India should also not expect him to resolve those problems that it has to tackle itself. Terrorism is such a problem. Whatever may be Obama's policy toward terrorism in Pakistan, India should have a concrete policy of its own on which it could also show a little firmness."

¶3. "UNITED STATES OF OBAMA" editorial in the January 23, 2009 Mumbai-based centrist Gujarati evening daily JANMABHOOMI. "Barack Obama's words 'Yes, we can' have demonstrated that dreams can be converted into a reality. The people of America and across the globe have high expectations from this leader who has promised change. However, what is important to keep in mind here is that any change requires time and patience. The aura of optimism and self-confidence surrounding Obama infuses enthusiasm in the midst of economic recession and other national and international challenges facing the new administration.

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¶4. "OBAMA'S FLIGHT" (i.e. Soaring Performance) editorial in the January 23, 2009, Mumbai edition of left-of-center Marathi daily LOKSATTA. "On the very first day in the Oval Office, President Barack Obama struck the right warning note to Pakistan. He said U.S. aid to Pakistan will depend on Pakistan's wholehearted cooperation in the war on terror. Naturally, this warning has upset the Pakistani establishment. Pakistan's ambassador to the U.S., Hussain Huqqani, said Obama seemed biased against Pakistan and that such threats will compel Pakistan to review its ties with the U.S. That kind of diplomatic response is not unlikely. Pakistan's foreign policy is made up of narrow blackmailing strategies."

¶5. "HILLARY'S NEW ROLE" editorial in the January 23, 2009, Mumbai edition of left-of-center Marathi daily MAHARASHTRA TIMES. "Finally Hillary Clinton has made it to the post of Secretary of State. The delay for the appointment was caused by an objection raised against her husband, the ex-president Bill Clinton's fundraising foundation. Concerns were raised in the senate about the foundation's acceptance of large donations from foreign countries and companies that could conflict with Clinton's work as the Secretary of State. However, Hillary Clinton seems to have won that battle. Now the world is waiting for some results. As a former first lady, she has a good understanding of foreign relations. As a senator, Hillary Clinton did not make much of an impact, other than positioning herself to take the plunge in the presidential race."

¶6. "BARACK OBAMA'S COMMENDABLE FIRMNESS," editorial in the January 23 pro-BJP Kolkata Bengali daily BARTAMAN. "Obama's cautioning Pakistan clearly shows that he has not forgotten his electoral promises. People expect exactly this from a politician. The peace-loving, anti-terror international community hopes that the President of the most powerful nation will try to translate his words into action. Obama has done a commendable job by threatening to stop civilian assistance to Pakistan. He is not yielding to Pakistan's blackmailing. Indian politicians should learn a lesson from it."

¶7. "POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE," editorial in the January 23

independent Kolkata Bengali daily ANANDABAZAR PATRIKA.
"President Obama's foreign policy statement has mixed significance for India. It's both positive and negative. India does not figure in the list of Asian countries identified by Obama as allies of the U.S. That a Democratic President returned to the White House after eight years and the text of his first foreign policy statement does not mention the name of the U.S.' natural ally -- India -- is significant indeed! During Bush's regime U.S.-India relations achieved a new dimension. Against this backdrop, it is a natural concern if India fades from Washington's diplomatic radar. However, India may take some solace for the time being from Obama getting tough on Afghanistan, and warning Pakistan. Maybe Obama's Washington will not loudly exhibit Indo-U.S. friendship but will do nothing that negatively impacts India. Obama will have to maintain a balance between the Democratic lobby's 'anti-India' stance and India's

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importance to the U.S...."

18. "EXPECTATIONS FROM OBAMA" editorial in the January 23 Guwahati Assamese left-of-center ASAMIYA PRATIDIN. "What Obama has inherited is an unending bloody war against terrorism and a declining American economy. Both the terrorist forces and the warmongers in the U.S. do not want this war to end, and Obama may not be able to completely break this cycle, but he will definitely try. What the world expects from Obama is that his leadership brings about peace and harmony, and not war. The coming months will show whether Obama's America is ready for that or not."

19. "OBAMA AND EXPECTATIONS", editorial in January 21 right-of-center Urdu daily INQUILAB, Mumbai: "If Obama had reached the White House as an ordinary President in usual circumstances, it would have been an unremarkable occasion. But he is not an ordinary President. The eyes of the entire world are at present focused on him, particularly those of the people of Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine, and those of prisoners in Abu Graib and Guantanamo, who have been detained without prosecution and subjected to physical, mental and psychological torture. Will Obama choose to play a key role in getting them justice? The previous President entrapped them in such a quagmire through his oppressive approach that they cannot even demand justice. Will Obama take care of democracy, liberty and human rights in their strict and real senses? Democracy meant oppression, liberty meant slavery and human rights meant supremacy of aggressors under the regime of Bush. Obama is considered a ray of hope. If he does not fulfill the aspirations of the people, a crisis deeper than the prevailing economic crisis will be inevitable."

10. "HOPES WITH OBAMA", editorial in January 22 right-of-center Urdu daily HAMARA SAMAJ, New Delhi: "It is true that American democracy has given the world a new dimension, a new ideology and a lesson of respect for humanity, which may be considered as an ideal for humanity. But, it is also true that American aggression has written an unparalleled history of tyranny and brutality. To harass the weak and feeble in order to demonstrate its strength and sovereignty; to hatch conspiracies to snatch the wealth of others; to trample all principles in order to justify the existence of its adopted son, Israel; to make efforts to demarcate new geographical borders and supply weapons of destruction the world over -- these are some of the black deeds of America that have brought its rulers disrepute throughout the world. Barack Hussein Obama is the beginning of a new era in the history of America. The whole world has expectations for him. It will be interesting to watch what changes Obama's team brings during its 4-year tenure. We hope that, in the new century, Obama will be a

powerful, strong and positive President of America, a President who will try to clean the image of America, and learn lessons from the errors, flaws and shortcomings of the past."

¶11. "KNOCK AT THE DOOR FOR A CHANGE", editorial in

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January 22 right-of-center Urdu daily RASHTRIYA SAHARA, New Delhi: "People say that everything changes in America except its policies. Heads of government change every four years but America's behavior with the third world never changes. Sometimes Republicans come to power and other times Democrats occupy the chair, but the modus operandi of policy framers in the American Senate and American Congress never changes. Every time the American people elect their new President with great pomp and show, but the President-elect does nothing except post its puppets in countries around the world. Advocating for a better democratic system in their country, the American statesmen think it safe to safeguard the interests of dictators, emperors and hot-headed rulers in other countries. These champions of democracy often extend their cooperation to non-democratic governments in allied countries. But this time, the world is sensing a change knocking on the door of world politics."

¶12. "INTENTIONS OF OBAMA", editorial in January 22 right-of-center Urdu daily INQUILAB, Mumbai: "It is evident from his speech that talks of the change Obama has called for, it is not made up of lies, selfishness and frauds. The situation seems to be a bit different. Since he hails from a different racial, family, economic and social background, his words and intentions therefore cannot be discarded. Hoping he will keep his words, billions of people throughout the world have belief and confidence in Obama. On one hand there are a number of issues, while on the other there is a mountain of hopes and expectations. In our opinion, this is the real and greatest challenge before Obama. History will feel proud of him, if he stands successful in meeting that challenge."

¶13. "THESE FOUR YEARS.....!" editorial in January 22 right-of-center Urdu daily URDU TIMES, Mumbai: "No doubt, the period of George W. Bush was the worst period in the history of mankind. But to suppose that the period of Barack Hussein Obama will remove all stains of tyrannies perpetrated during Bush's rule is to live in a fool's paradise. What Bush did during his 8-year tenure cannot be credited to Bush's account alone. Those were the pre-conceived and well-deliberated decisions of the Bush administration and the American government. The Presidency of Obama is the beginning of the rule of slaves. The person who took the oath in the White House on January 20 is a son of those slaves who shed their blood in constructing it in 1792. Besides, it is a fact that the real rulers of America are Neo-Cons -- i.e. White Anglo Saxon Protestant (WASP) Christians, who are dedicated to serving Zionism, and protecting the Zionist imperialist capitalist system."

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